



Past Cooperative Experiences— Successes, **Challenges, and** **Lessons Learned**

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A man with short, light-colored hair is seated at a desk, looking directly at the camera. He is wearing a dark suit jacket, a white dress shirt, and a purple and white striped tie. His hands are resting on the desk in front of him. The background is a blurred cityscape, likely Sioux City, Iowa, with various buildings and structures visible under a hazy sky. The overall image has a slightly grainy, video-like quality.

From the home office in Sioux City, Iowa...

Top Ten Things That Screw Up the Cooperative Process

10) “Steve, can you get me a final NRD number by Thursday?”

Attorneys or managers don't understand the NRDA process.



Top Ten Things That Screw Up the Cooperative Process

9) “I need to review everything you’ve done in the past three months.”

People enter the process mid-stream and are unwilling to accept the conclusions of their colleagues.



Top Ten Things That Screw Up the Cooperative Process

8) “We need 360 transects to measure the effect of carbon dioxide emissions on Snowy Plover reproduction.”

Some view the assessment as an opportunity to fund outstanding research needs or to simply create work opportunities.



Top Ten Things That Screw Up the Cooperative Process

7) “Let’s simplify the assessment and skip that study.”

The RP refuses to fund (and the Trustees decide not to pursue) a \$10,000 study that could resolve a \$1,000,000 variable.



Top Ten Things That Screw Up the Cooperative Process

6) “Let’s plan another meeting to talk about that little study.”

Both sides expend more than \$20,000 in time and travel costs discussing the \$10,000 study that is never implemented.



Top Ten Things That Screw Up the Cooperative Process

5) “Well, it looks like our next meeting will have to be in eight months, because that’s the first time all of us are available.”

The joint technical team is too large and poorly organized.



Top Ten Things That Screw Up the Cooperative Process

4) “15% oiled! Outrageous! 17% at least.”

Every fact, every statement, and every parameter is hotly contested, such that no progress occurs over several meetings.



Top Ten Things That Screw Up the Cooperative Process

3) “We are not able to agree to anything at this time.”

Each side refuses to agree on even the most obvious preliminary scientific facts of the case until they can examine the dollar implications down the road.



Top Ten Things That Screw Up the Cooperative Process

2) “I can neither confirm nor deny that beach segment A-14 was 15% oiled. We’ll review it with a man behind the curtain and get back to you before Christmas.”

No one with even tentative decision-making authority is at the table.



Top Ten Things That Screw Up the Cooperative Process

1) “I don’t care what was agreed to; the scientists don’t represent my client.”

The legal council does not honor the joint conclusions of the RP-Trustee technical group. Instead, such conclusions are treated as “advisory only” and the agreements are subject to retraction.



Good projects settle tough cases.

